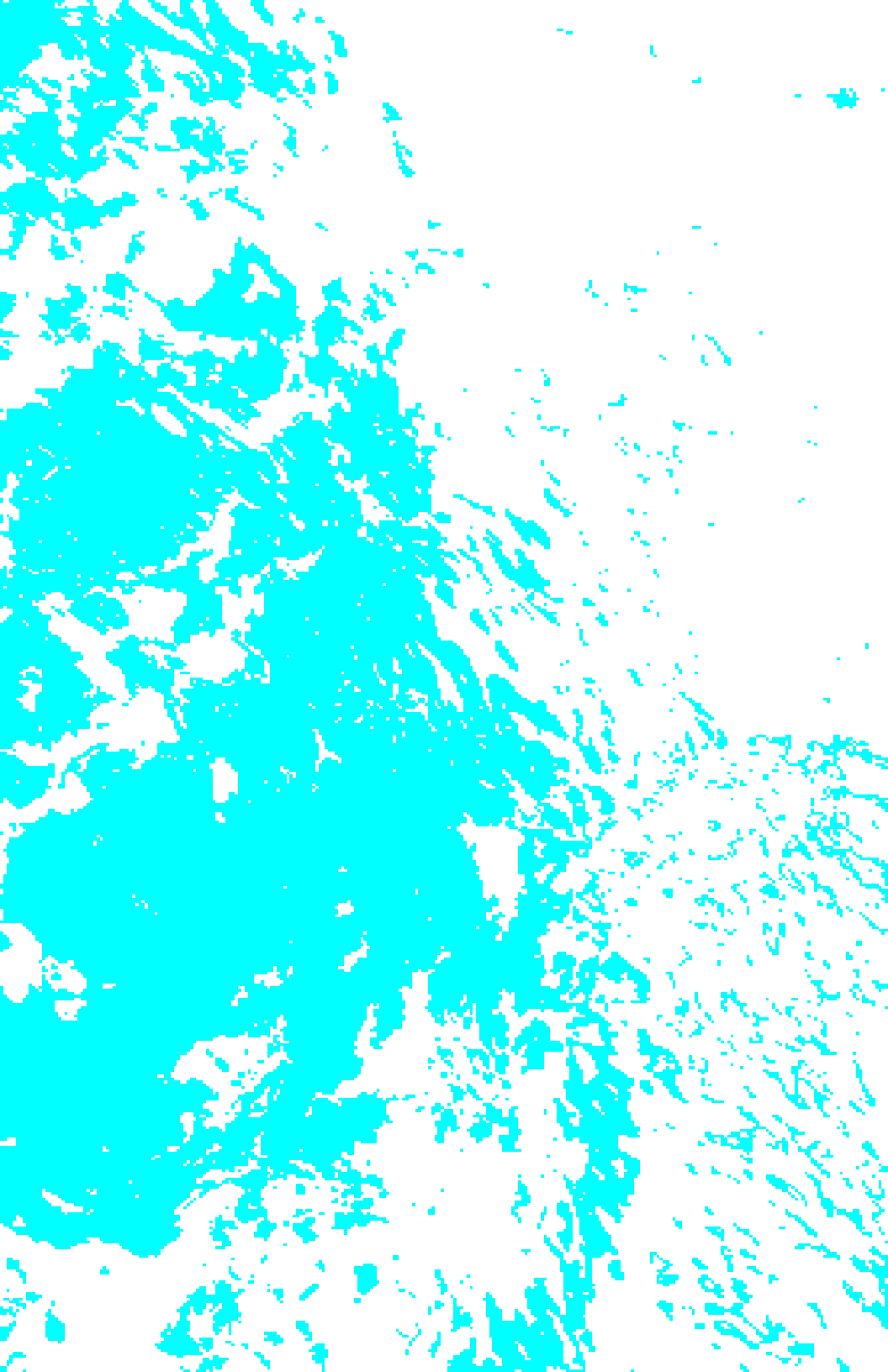
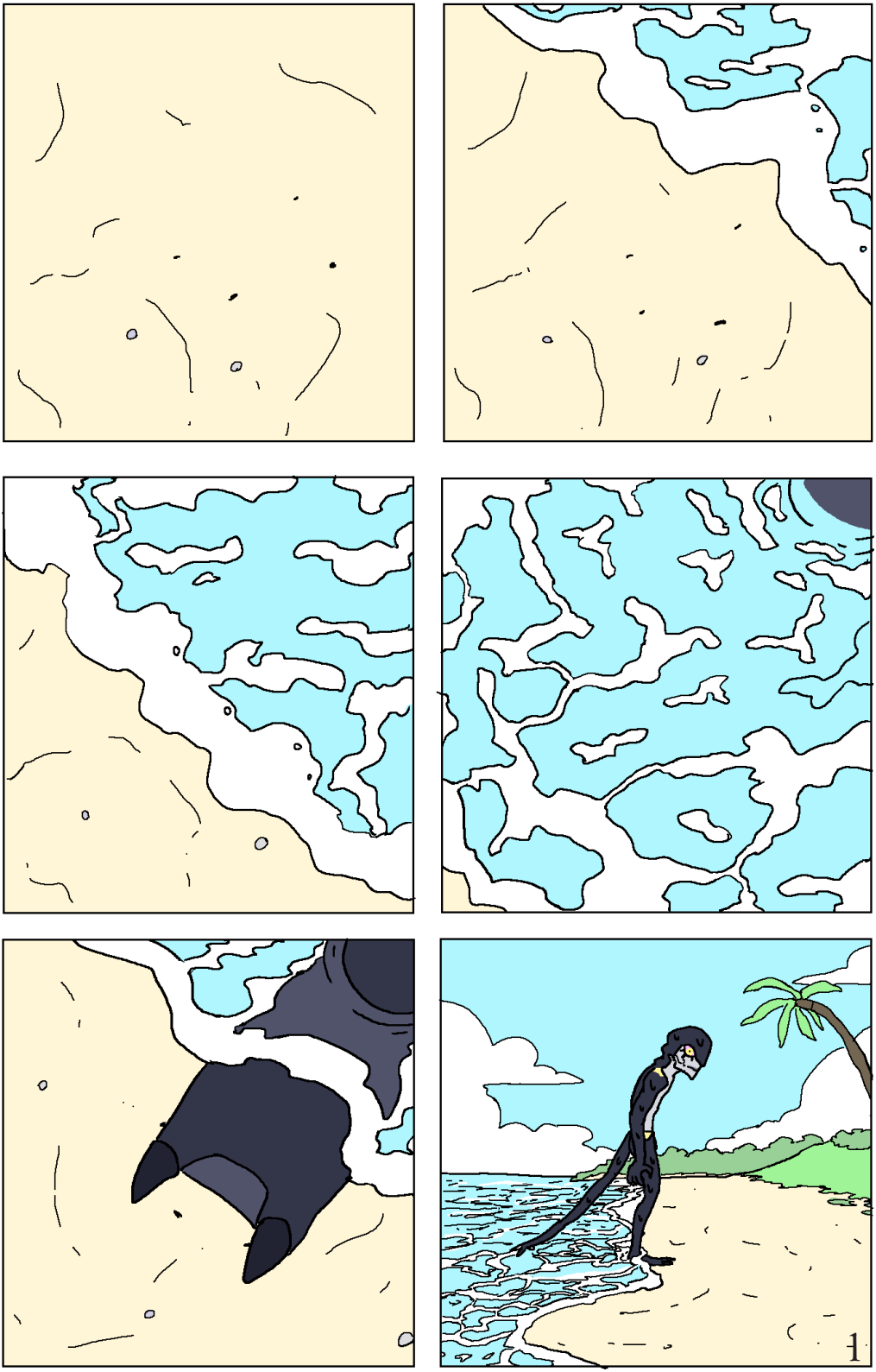
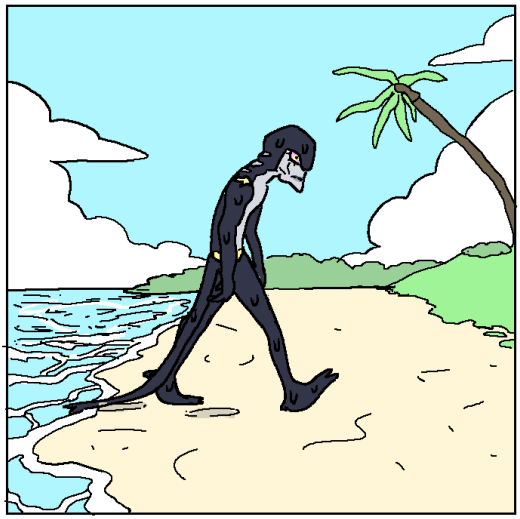
INSTRUCTION MANUAL

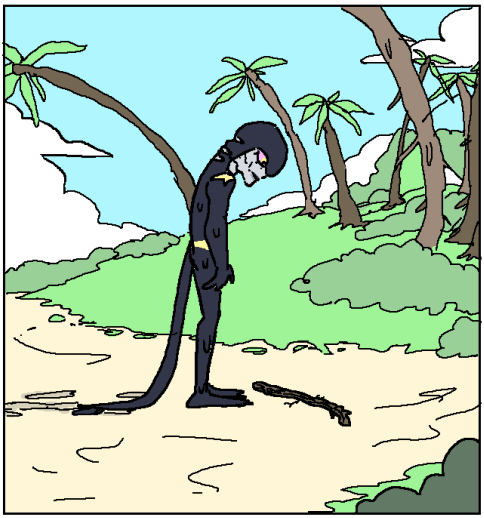


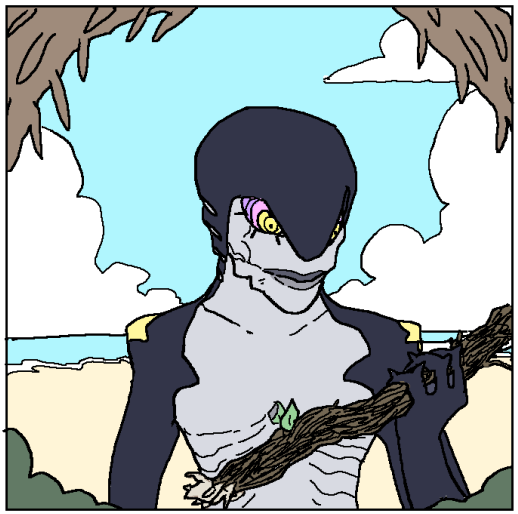


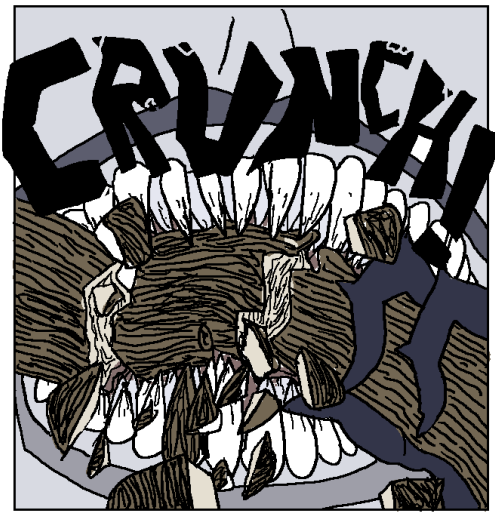
PROLOGUE: GETTING SOME AIR



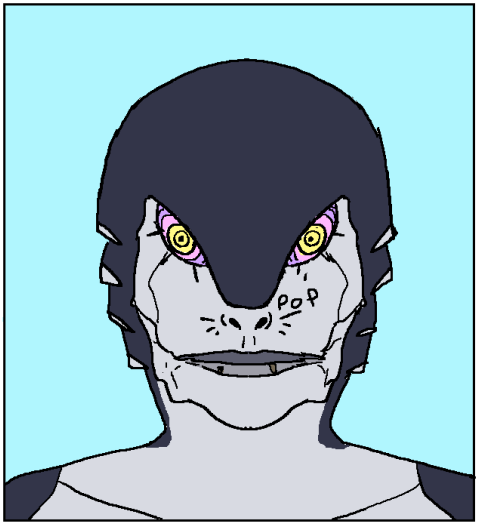







CRUNCH!


MUNCH
MUNCH
2


POP



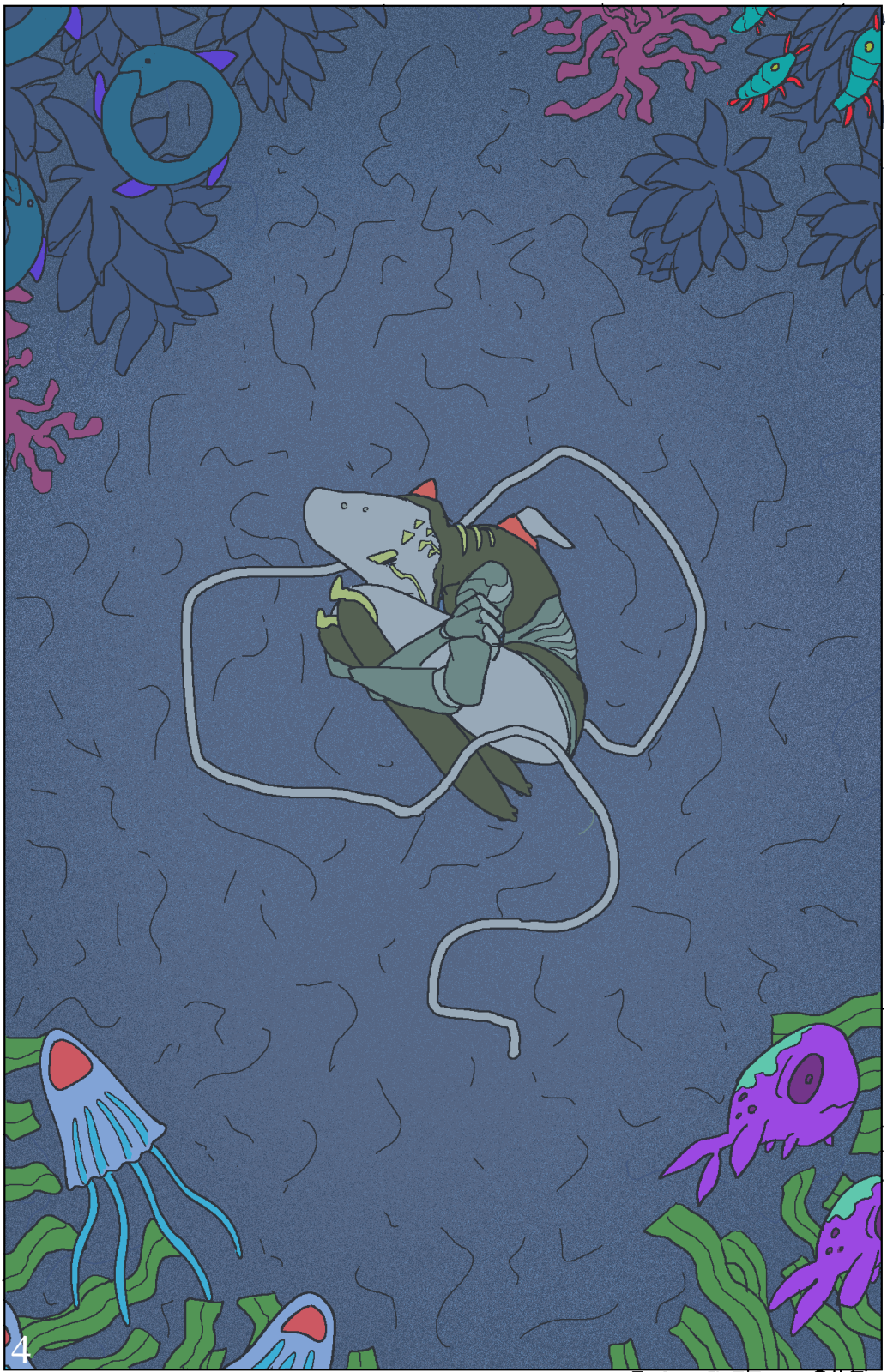

YAWEEN
POP


SCRATCH
SCRATCH
POP








4
END OF PROLOGUE.

Dear lover-of-past,

People on the surface invented this "writing", which allows us to transmit ideas from further distances than telepathy allows. It's a wonderful tool and it's what you're currently looking at. They have also invented bottles, in which this letter is encased. They normally use it to hold liquid, I suppose as a way to keep us connected to our origins, though it can also do the opposite as you can hopefully tell (liquid disintegrates paper, which is what the characters are on).

Bottles also help satiate a new need I have discovered on the surface: the want for liquid inside of my mouth. It may be our bodies protesting the severance and begging us to rescind. But strangely sea water repulses my tongue.

I think I will not turn back. I enjoy all the discoveries I'm making. When I try swimming now, the ocean rejects me. I much prefer walking and running, which is sort of like falling. It is very exciting.

Wishes of wellness.

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Intro

coalescent // tidal rapture is the story of a swimmer caught adrift in an aquatic society that is changing in exciting and frightening ways. it was delivered to us from an unknown source. it is unclear whether the story has happened in ancient times, is currently happening beneath our feet, or will happen in a far-off future. this manual is an attempt to gather what we know about it and share it with the rest of the world. dive in.

> Do people on the surface have Coral-net?

> If you are reading this, you are cursed. Spread this message to 3 other Coralnet to break the curse, or you will be eaten by a whale in 3 days.

> Don't fear the currents that attack you, fear the fake friends that sing to you.

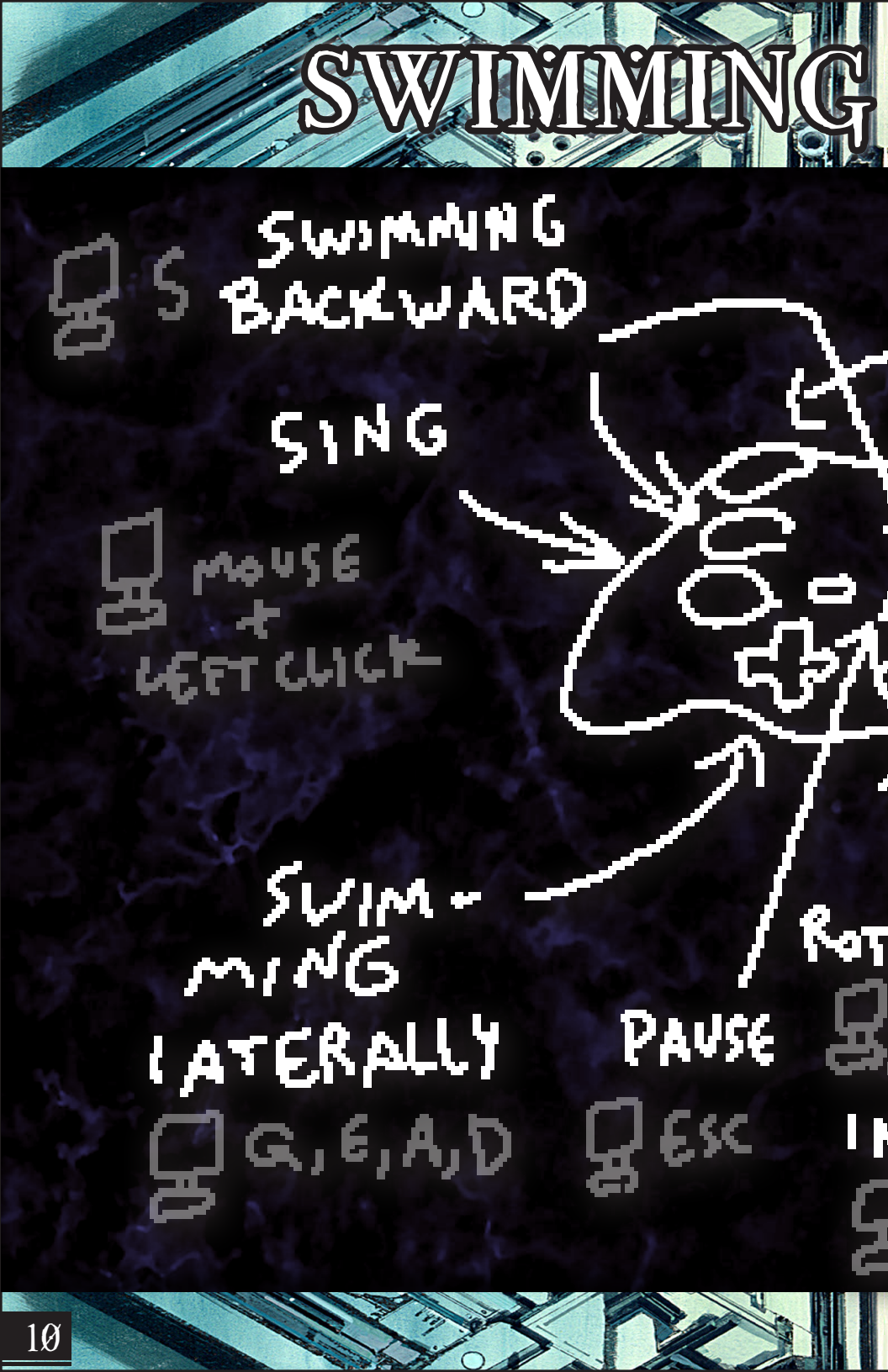
> My fin fell off. What should I do?

THE DEVICE

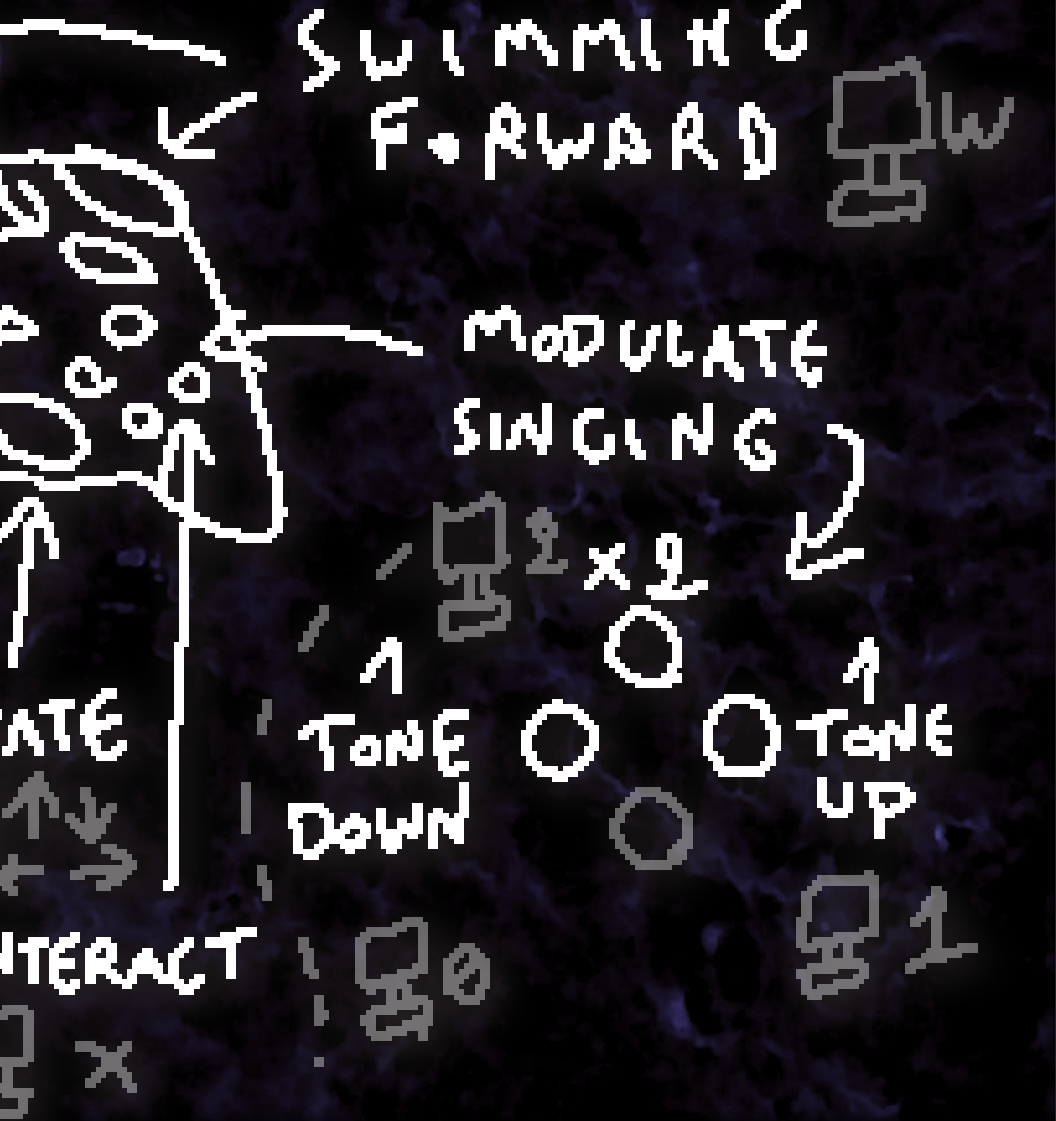


This mysterious device appeared with *coalescent*. Its inner workings are unknown. It is tempting to call it a “controller”, as there seems to be a correlation between button presses/joystick flicks and the swimmers’ behavior, but it may be more sensible to call it a “connector” as we likely are actually merely enacting what has or is or will happen which we now witness. In the next few pages we lay out specific connections.

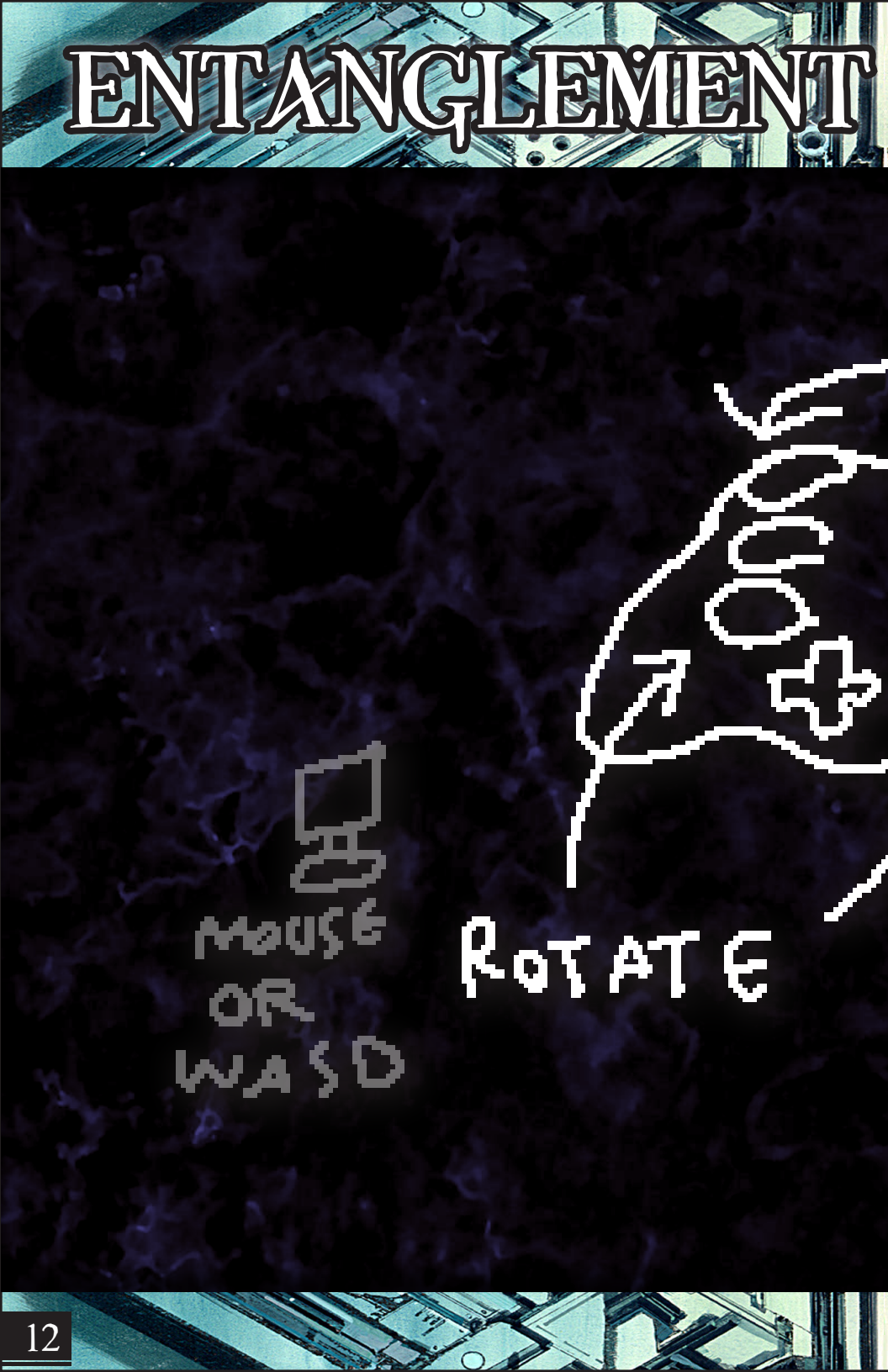
SWIMMING


SWIMMING BACKWARD
S
SING
MOUSE + LEFT CLICK
SWIM-MING LATERALLY
W, E, A, D
PAUSE
ESC

CONNECTIONS

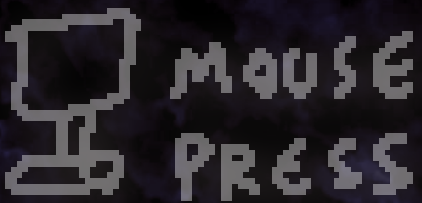


ENTANGLEMENT



CONNECTIONS





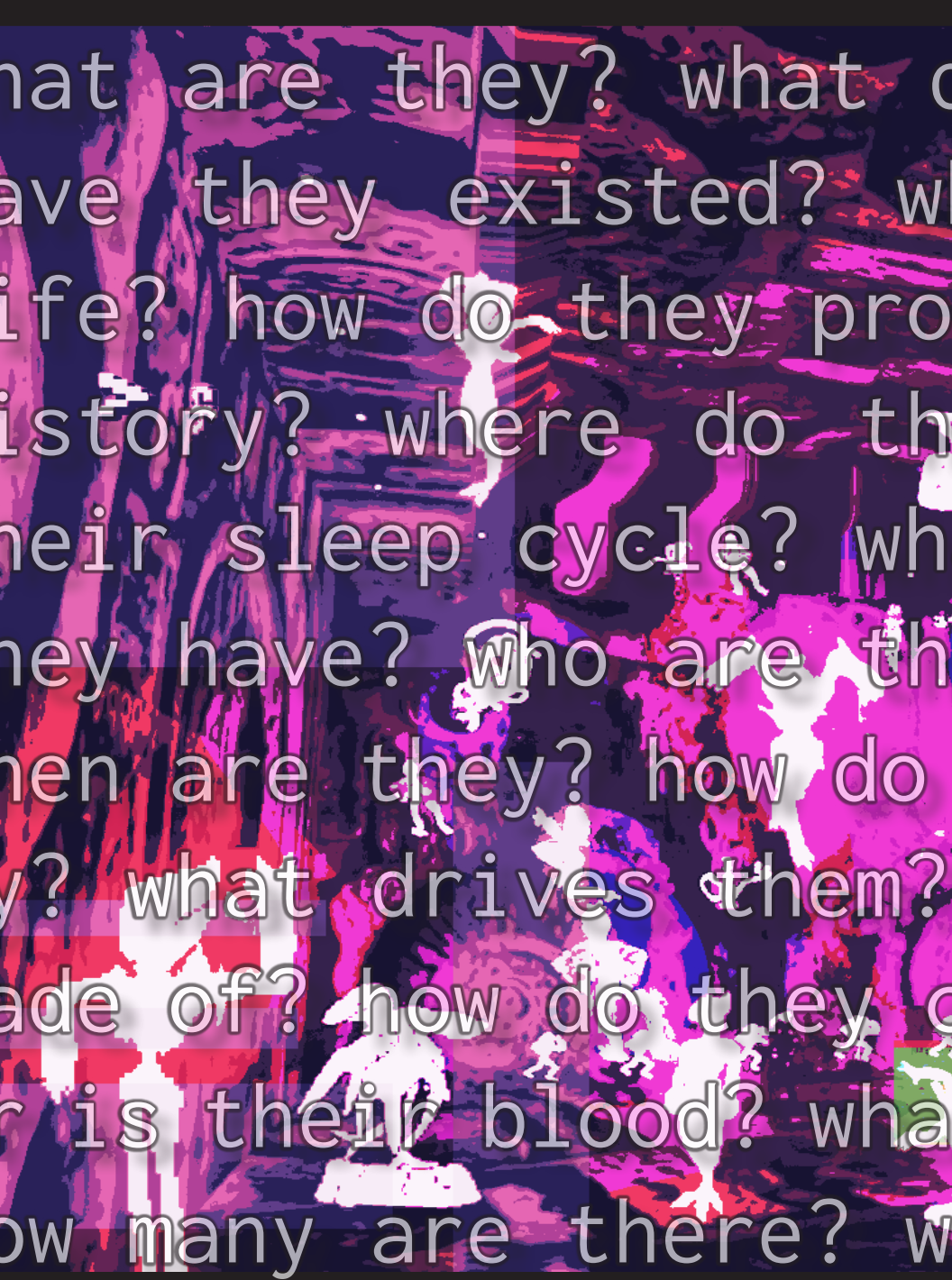
OTHER CONNECTIONS

Throughout the journey, you will find other connections. These will beome clear in due time.

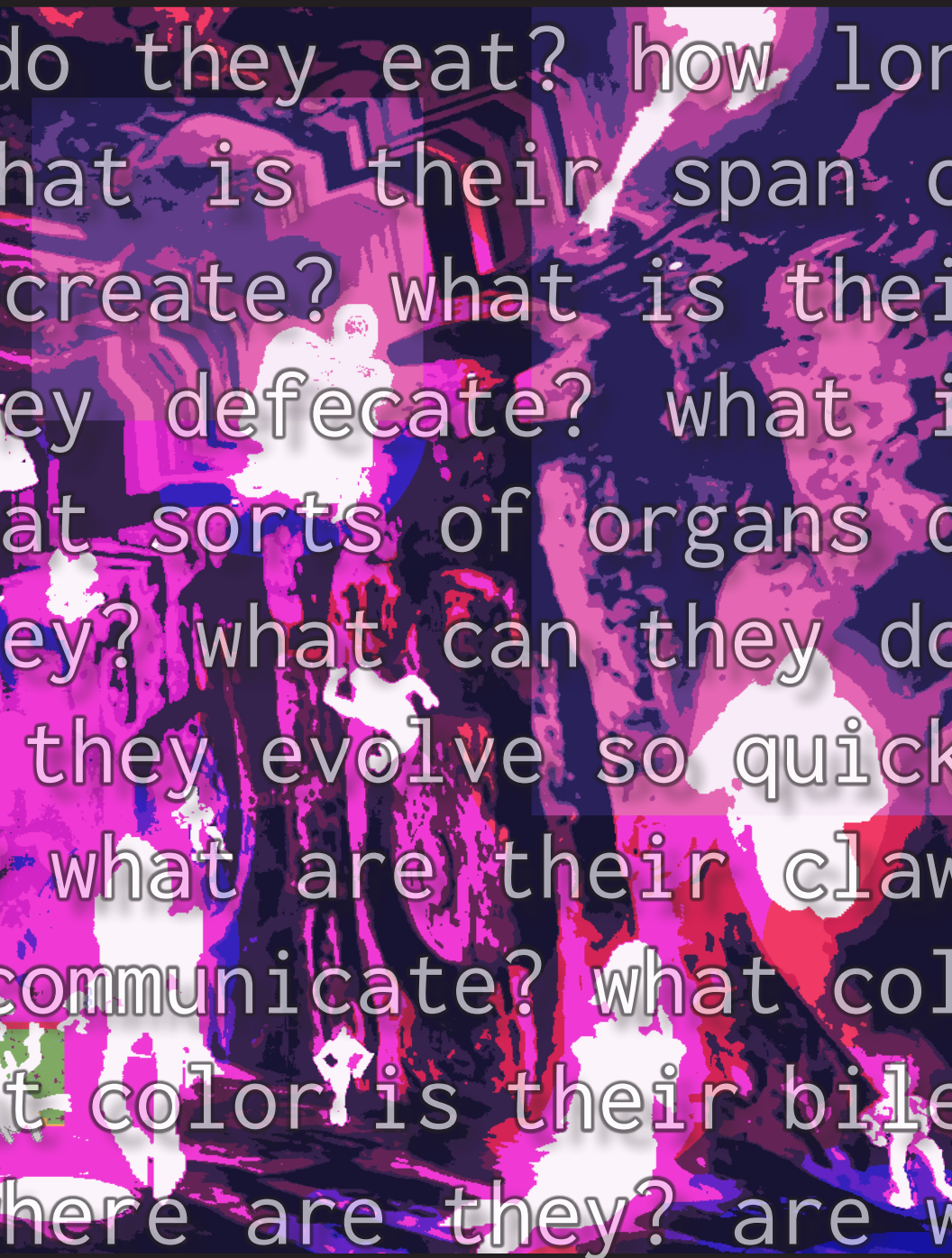
> I have been doing this for a while... Have you ever wondered why the food you left in the diner is always gone after a while? It's me. I ate all of them.

> I am so embarrassed by my gluttony. But what can I do? The food is too good! Anyways, just need to get it out.

> P.S. Don't ever try to pin me down in real life. This has become a big part of my life, and I can do anything to protect it.


hat are they? what
ave they existed? w
ife? how do they pro
istory? where do th
heir sleep cycle? wh
hey have? who are th
hen are they? how do
y? what drives them?
ade of? how do they
r is their blood? wha
ow many are there? w

MERPEOPL


do they eat? how lon
hat is their span o
create? what is thei
ey defecate? what i
at sorts of organs d
ey? what can they do
they evolve so quick
what are their claw
communicate? what col
t color is their bile
here are they? are w

E BIOLOGY

SWIMMING

Swimming is the merpeople's primary mode of traversal. To better understand their way of life, we too must become one with the water. These are some tips for a more f luid experience.

SWIMMING TIP:

RHYTHMIC PRESSES



To swim fast, press the SWIM FORWARD BUTTON at a rhythmic pattern, once around every half a second. If you press too fast, you won't get anywhere; the swimmer needs to rest between strokes!

SWIMMING TIP:

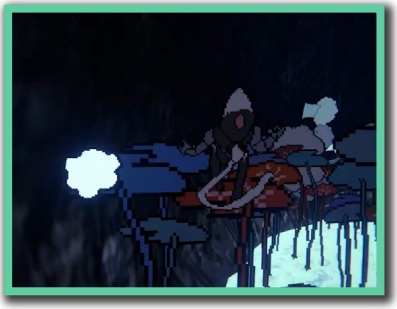
COASTING



Long pressing any SWIM BUTTON makes you slowly coast onwards. This is a more relaxed form of swimming, ideal for sightseeing and drifting away.

SWIMMING TIP:

WALL KICKS



Pressing the SWIM FORWARD BUTTON while being around a 90 degree angle from a wall or quick pressing the SWIM BACKWARD BUTTON while facing a wall will make the swimmer kick the wall and gain a short

SWIMMING TIP:

U-TURN

Quick pressing the SWIM BACKWARD BUTTON makes the swimmer swiftly turn around. Perfect for fast turns and getting a sense of your surroundings.

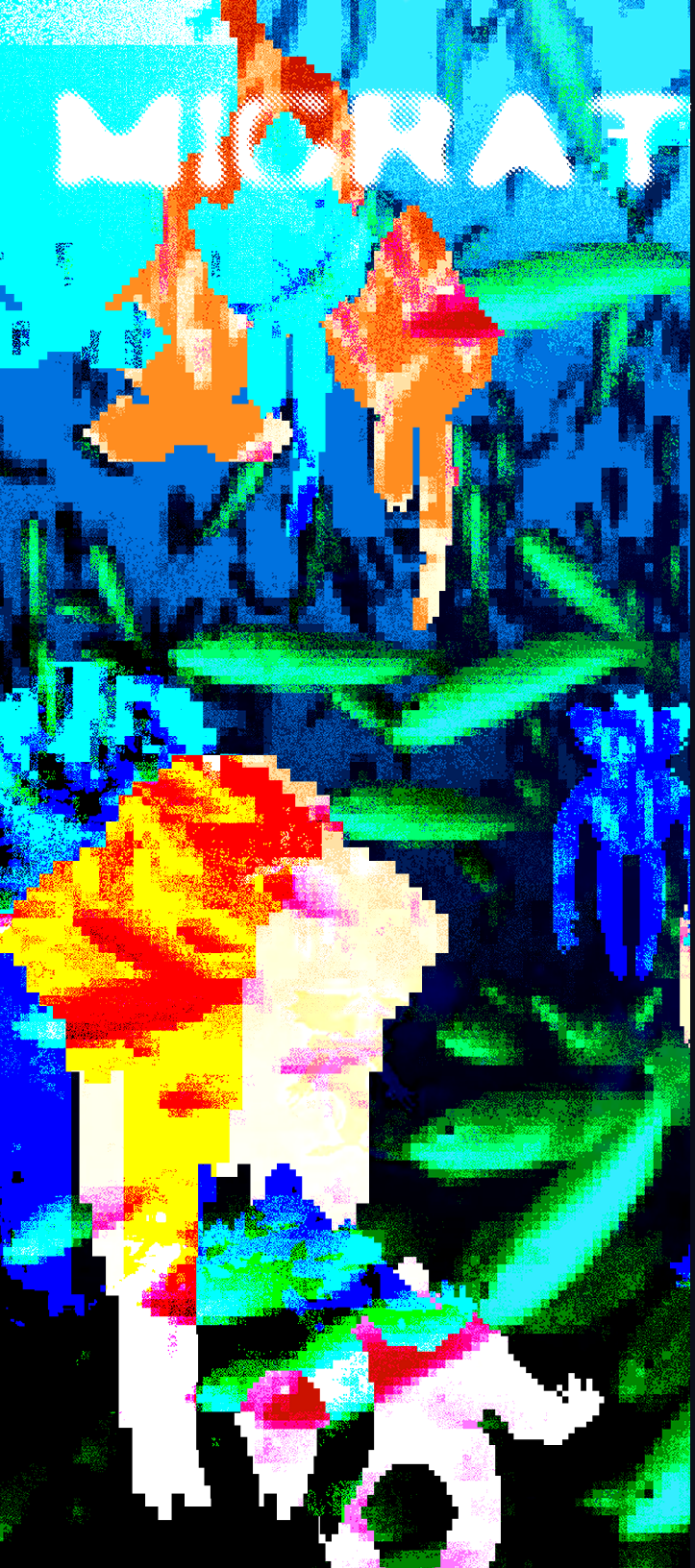


Dear lover-of-before-and-down-below,

Today, on the beach, something incredible happened. I was gathered with some other leavers at night when one of them started striking two rocks together for the making of music. Suddenly, a blinding and warm blaze appeared. When I touched it, it made my extremities howl with pain, but when I sat a bit further away, I was content and warm. It also makes food taste different.

Another thing I've discovered is the entanglement. You've probably done it by now. I hear it's a little bit different underwater, because of the weaker pull of the earth (very strong here!). I find that it's not all some have made it out to be. I feel more excited about climbing, rolling, and creating fires. But perhaps I've just not done it well or with enough partners. I'm open to more experimentation.

I wonder what it would've been like with you.



At the end of an indeterminate period of time, most merpeople migrate to a different habitat. It is unclear why they do so, as the periods are fluid and don't seem to line up with real life seasons or patterns such as mating or food availability.

Once it begins, few stay behind.

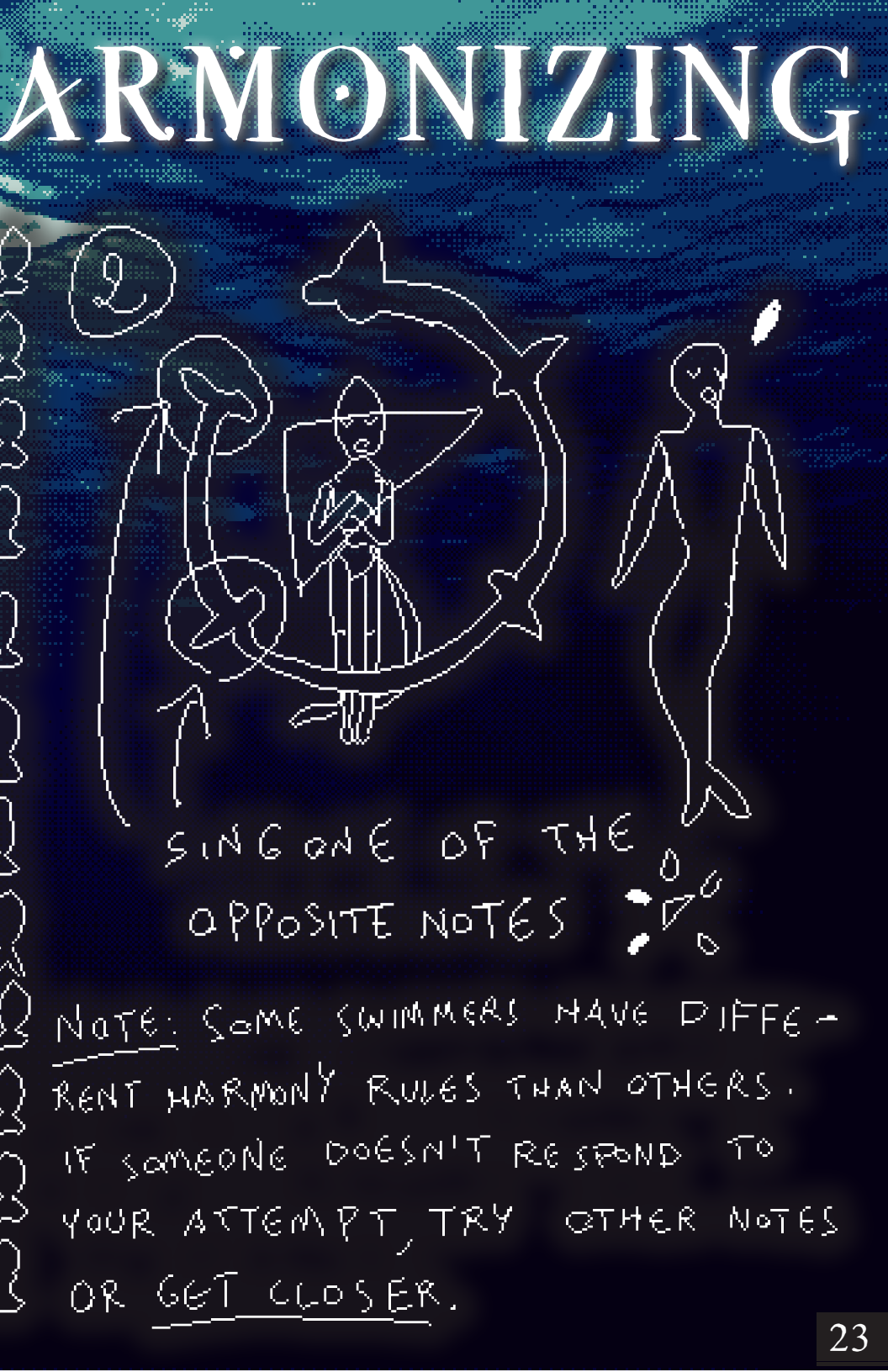
You can find some of the documented worlds at page 32-34.

SINGING & H

DIFFERENTLY FROM US, MERPEOPLE DO NOT USE SPEECH TO COMMUNICATE; THEY "TALK" TELEPATHICALLY. HOWEVER, THEY FIRST NEED TO BE "IN TUNE", A.K.A. ESTABLISH A PSYCHIC LINK, WHICH IS HELPED BY SINGING & HARMONIZING. TUNING MAY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH OTHER MEANS.



HARMONIZING

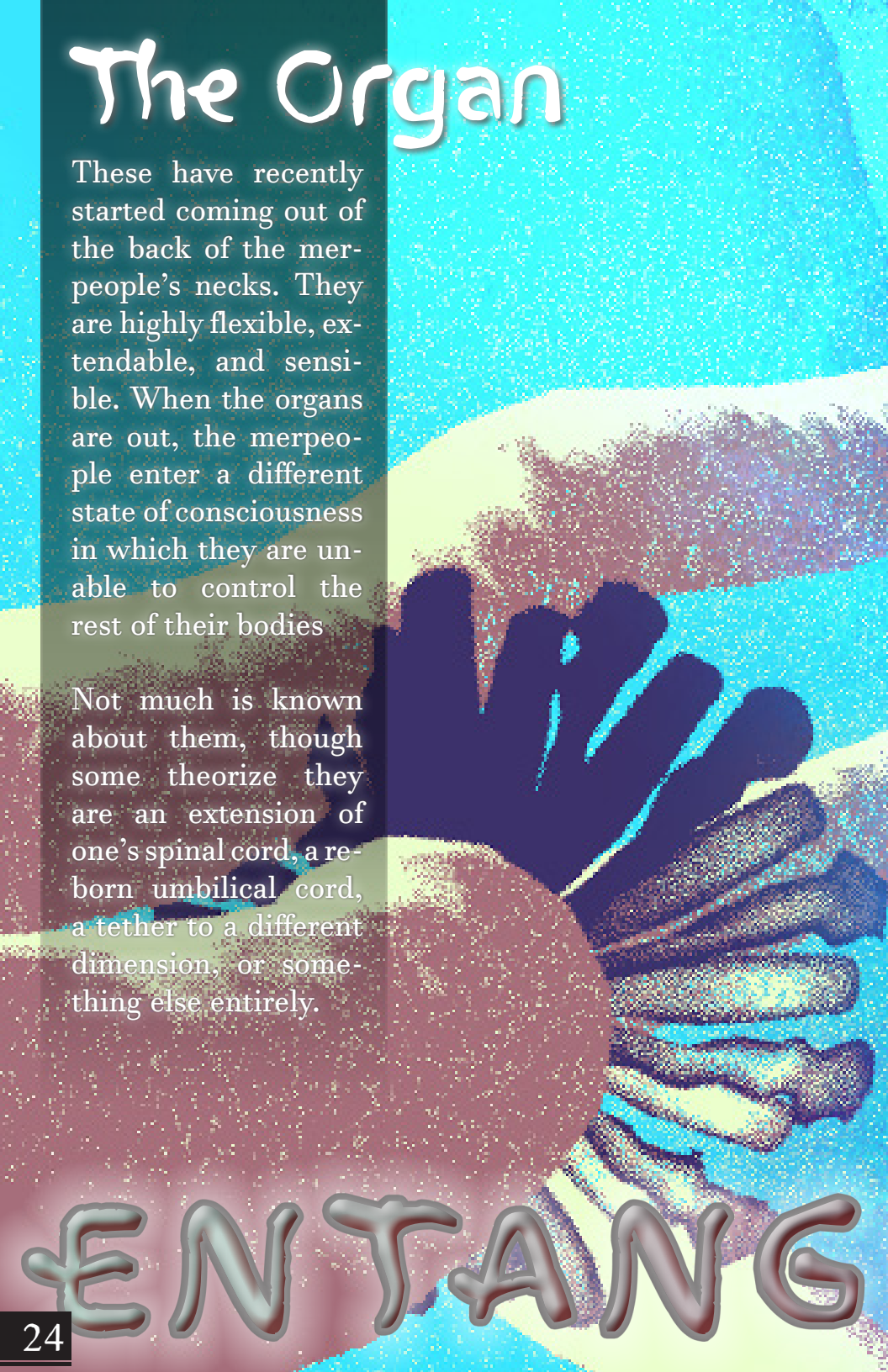


NOTE: SOME SWIMMERS HAVE DIFFERENT HARMONY RULES THAN OTHERS. IF SOMEONE DOESN'T RESPOND TO YOUR ATTEMPT, TRY OTHER NOTES OR GET CLOSER.

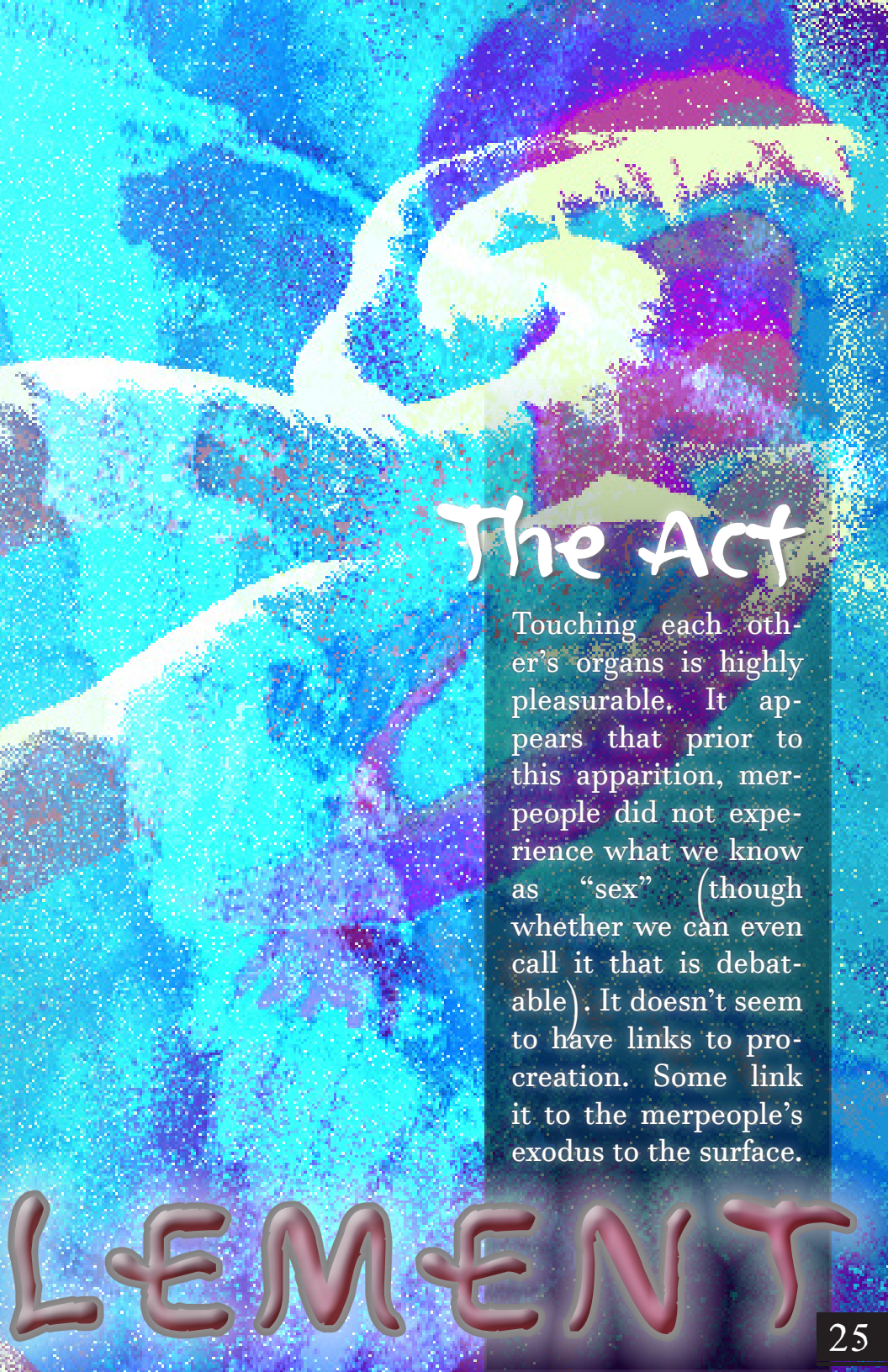
The Organ

These have recently started coming out of the back of the merpeople's necks. They are highly flexible, extendable, and sensible. When the organs are out, the merpeople enter a different state of consciousness in which they are unable to control the rest of their bodies

Not much is known about them, though some theorize they are an extension of one's spinal cord, a reborn umbilical cord, a tether to a different dimension, or something else entirely.



ENTANG



The Act

Touching each other's organs is highly pleasurable. It appears that prior to this apparition, merpeople did not experience what we know as "sex" (though whether we can even call it that is debatable). It doesn't seem to have links to procreation. Some link it to the merpeople's exodus to the surface.

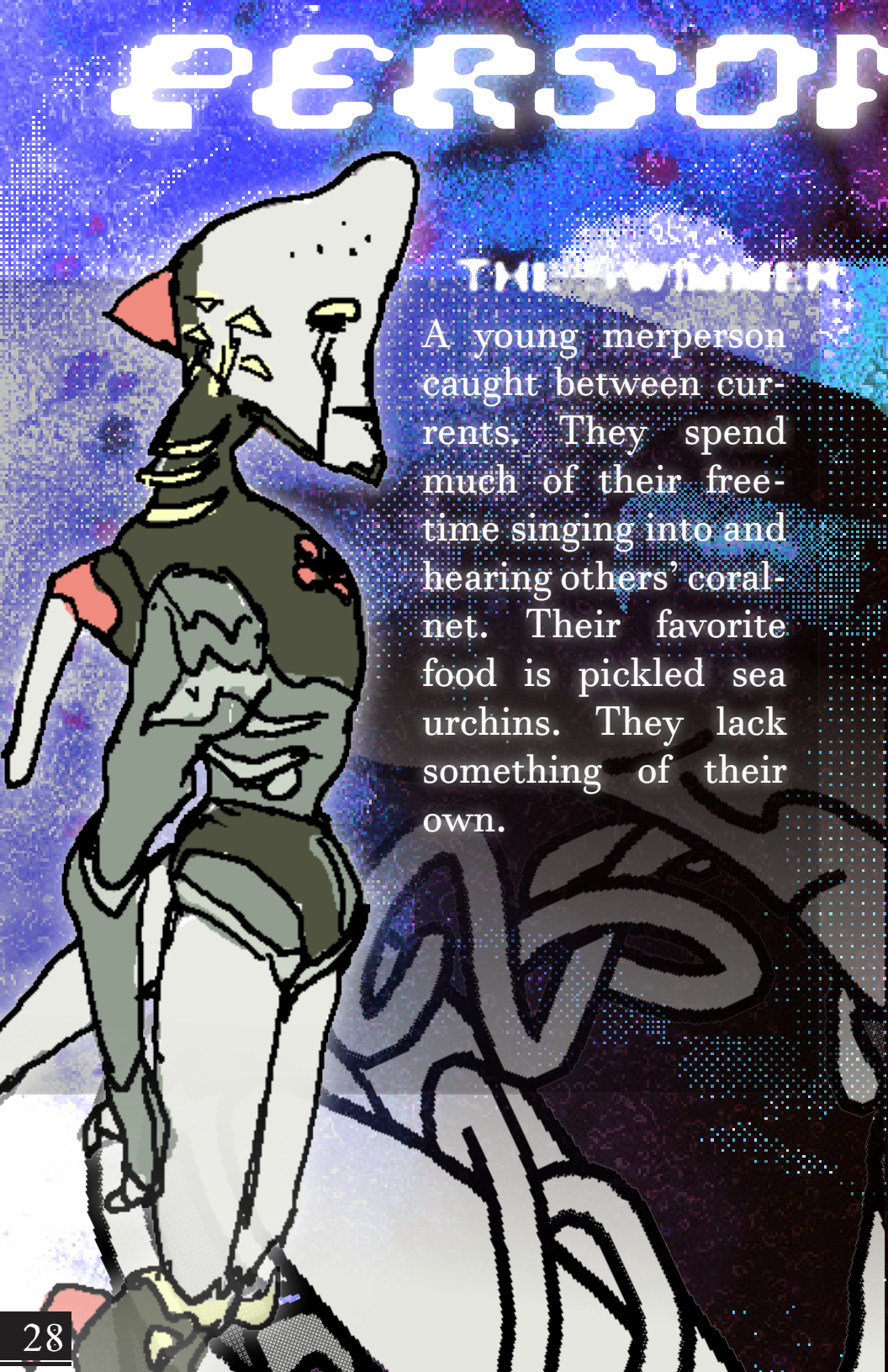
LEMENT

Many mer-people are permanently moving to the surface.

> I am enkido. I ran into a big trouble. I need you to hide numerous anchovies under the third table in the diner. When it's done, I'll give you a lot of anchovies

> I am a shark. I can prove it.

> Sorry, it was my cousin. What should I do to punish them?


PERSON
THE TWINKLE
A young merperson caught between currents. They spend much of their free-time singing into and hearing others' coral-net. Their favorite food is pickled sea urchins. They lack something of their own.

YMAGES

One of the first mer-people to hear the call of the surface. They used to be romantically involved with the Swimmer. The comic at the beginning of this book is an artist's speculation on what might've happened to them since, but not much is actually known about them.

THE FX

THE CONFIDANT



Begrudgingly, the Swimmer's closest and only friend. They pride themself on their propriety and angelic singing voice. They are inimical about the changes in merpeople society though unperturbed as they know things will eventually go back to normal. They never liked the Ex.



THE ADMIRER



An easygoing and kind merperson. They used to be playmates with the Swimmer when they were younger. Now, they enjoy racing other swimmers in the tunnels and hunting sharks. Lately, they've taken to encrusting their back with shiny gemstones.

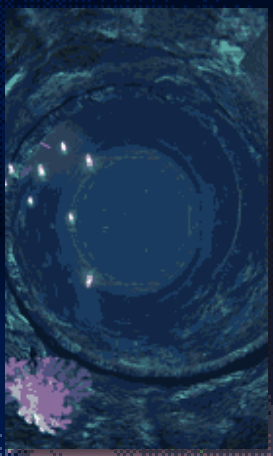
ENKIDU



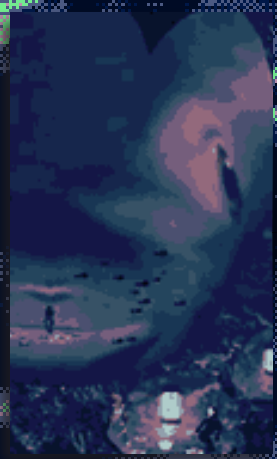
One of the most popular merpeople out there and a pioneer in many forms. They were the first to have a name and start wearing clothes. They throw legendary dancing parties in the second world every cycle. They get fulfillment from mentoring young swimmers in bloom, though nothing can truly snare them away from the heat of the spree.

first world

The Library



Home of the coralnet a living network of organisms which the merpeople can sing into and hear others' thoughts. Many use it to confess their burdensome secret or simply connect with others in a less pressuring environment. Records disappear at the whim of the coralnet and nothing is preserved forever. Those who spend too much time here are shunned as antisocial, but in truth everyone resorts to it every once and then.

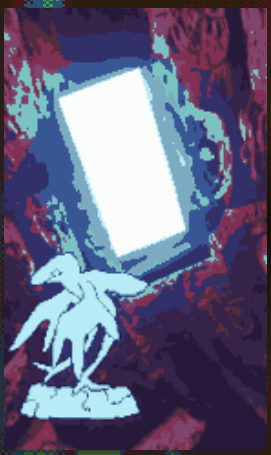


The Diner

A popular dining establishment in which merpeople bring their own catch. No one "works" here though certain individuals take fetishistic pleasure in chopping, pickling, stuffing or marinading other merpeople's food, which they are glad to hand off and enjoy.

There are several "worlds" that the merpeople have or will inhabit. Here are the currently known ones.

second world



The Temple

From a past civilization, these ruins house devices that thump and throb and sing as well as statues of bizarrely shaped beings. The merpeople know nothing about the temple - if it even is one - 's previous residents though they often describe a damp presence inside of their chest when they visit. Some find comfort in it.

The Center

The center of the party world, a gigantic arena in which all sorts of sensual and grizzly acts are performed. A tunnel at the top directly leads to the surface.



Currently unexplored.

Dear one-whom-I-have-left-and-who-is-in-the-ocean,

Today, I gathered seashells on the beach. I have used them to decorate my sleeping place. These days, people mostly dwell in the same environment and move much less frequently. But I grow restless, so I think I will move further inland. There is more to discover.

It has recently come upon me how unlikely it is for you to find these letters (the bottles float), and the even slighter likeliness of you knowing how to decipher them. So I will probably stop writing them.

I also was also recalling one day, when you told me how terribly sad and distraught you would be if I were ever to go away. This was strange as it was a significant period of time before I even knew I was being pulled, so I've been wondering whether you somehow knew before me. Do you remember what I replied? I'm not sure anymore but I know I was struck by the intensity of your feelings. It all must be very distracting.

I do not share your feelings because I am content I have gone away. Every day I eat delightful foods and I cavort. I would've been content for you as well if it was you that went away.

INTERVIEW WITH

Favorite sex position?
HX: Seahorse, reverse seahorse, sluggy style, backstroke

If you could change anything about human sexuality, what would it be?
HB: It would be nice if you could phase certain parts of your body into your partner's while keeping other parts solid, kind of like kitty pryde from the X-Men.

If you could return to the ocean, would you?
HB: I would like to try.

Are you satisfied with your sex life?
HB: Maybe one day
HX: Never

Where do you like swimming the most?
HX: Places where I am not allowed to swim.

What is your earliest swimming memory?
HB: I went to the beach with my parents a lot. It was one of those things that I always hated doing because of how arduous the process was but when I ended up in the water it was pretty cool. But I could never hold on to that feeling enough to get past the arduousness.

At what age would you like to die?
HX: 77.

I'm afraid of swimming, what can I do?
HB: Imagine that the water is made of billions of micro slippery organisms experiencing constant bliss and lapping and begging at you to join them, now wouldn't it be nice to become part of it?
HX: It's ok to be afraid of swimming. People out there might be like: "what if your plane crashes into the ocean?" Don't let them get you. Everyone is going to die in that situation. Accept your non-swimming self.

I'm afraid of sex, what can I do?

HB: You don't have to do it.
HX: Do it a lot.

What is your favorite sea food?
HB: Shrimp and calamari and squid. I don't like the other stuff.
HX: Seaweed.

Imagine that a videogame was filled with water. Everytime you open it, it comes streaming out of your computer's ports, the spaces between your display's pixels, and the bottom of your mouse. How would you react?
HB: That would shock me.

Where do you feel loneliest?
HX: In my shower.

What kind of parties do you enjoy the most?
HB: Lots of dancing, my friends are around. I don't drink, so I find it easier to be less self-conscious also if I take off my glasses.

How do you feel knowing that no matter how much you try to swim further down the water will always reject you?
HB: Extremely sad and lonely.

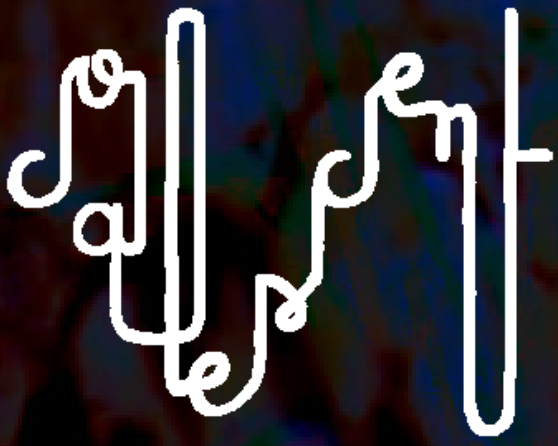
I feel myself changing. Should I be scared?
HB: I envy you.

Who in the world do you miss the most?
HX: my grandma

Which kind of marine life are you?
HX: Blobfish.
HB: I'm a human being.

Would you trade your voice for human legs?
HB: I guess this is about the famous folk tale. If I had the hindsight of knowing the prince would never love me enough? No. But if I were in the same position as the little mermaid, then yes, most likely. I'm a romantic at heart.

Name 3 famous aquatic animal.
HX: ermmm… ermm…. Ermmmmm… Paul the Octopus? ■



coalescent || tidal rapture

(a videogame)

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(@hanwenxumame)
hatim benhsain
(@hatimb00)

published by:
Games for my Computer
(@games4mycomputer)